

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF LAW & PUBLIC SAFETY
DIVISION OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
BOARD OF NURSING

IN THE MATTER OF THE LICENSE OF	:	Administrative Action
	:	
	:	
	:	
KOUPU GOFFA, R.N.	:	
License # 26NR 12629200	:	FINAL ORDER
	:	OF DISCIPLINE
	:	
TO PRACTICE NURSING IN THE	:	
STATE OF NEW JERSEY	:	

This matter was opened to the New Jersey State Board of Nursing ("Board") upon receipt of information which the Board has reviewed and upon which the following findings of fact and conclusions of law are made:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Koupu Goffa ("Respondent") is a registered professional nurse (RN) in the State of New Jersey, and has been a licensee at all times relevant hereto.

2. On more than one occasion in 2014, while employed as a nurse at Trenton Psychiatric Hospital, Respondent falsified medical records. That is, Respondent took nursing records

prepared by other nurses evaluating the status and condition of certain patients, "whited out" the dates of those records and the signatures of the other nurses, and signed her own name to the records, as well as applying the current date, although it was some months after the date on the original records. The information on the medical records was otherwise identical to the previous record, and did not reflect any new information.

3. Respondent admitted that she engaged in the falsification of three medical records because of stressful working conditions and human error.

4. Respondent indicated on her 2014 application for renewal of her nursing license that she would have completed all required nursing continuing education for the June 1, 2012 - May 31, 2014 biennial period by May 31, 2014. However, Respondent was only able to provide documentation of nursing continuing education completed out of time on April 21, 2015.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. Respondent's conduct, in falsifying medical records, constitutes deceptive conduct in violation of N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(b) and professional misconduct in violation of N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(e).

2. Respondent's failure to document timely completion of required continuing education for the June 1, 2012 - May 31, 2014 licensing cycle constitutes a violation of N.J.A.C. 13:37-

5.3, subjecting Respondent to sanctions pursuant to N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(e) and (h).

3. Respondent's falsely indicating on her 2014 renewal application that she would complete all required continuing education for the June 1, 2012 - May 31, 2014 licensing cycle by May 31, 2014 constitutes misrepresentation in violation of N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(b).

DISCUSSION

Based on the foregoing findings and conclusions, a Provisional Order of Discipline seeking two reprimands, a two hundred and fifty dollar (\$250) civil penalty, and completion of a documentation course was entered on December 8, 2015. Copies were served upon Respondent via regular and certified mail. The Provisional Order was subject to finalization by the Board at 5:00 p.m. on the thirtieth day following entry unless Respondent requested a modification or dismissal of the stated findings of fact and conclusions of law by setting forth in writing any and all reasons why said findings and conclusions should be modified or dismissed and submitting any and all documents or other written evidence supporting Respondent's request for consideration and reasons therefor.

Respondent replied to the Provisional Order of Discipline and requested modification or dismissal thereof. With regards to the continuing education issues, Respondent maintained that

she had taken college courses in an RN - BSN program during the June 1, 2012 - May 31, 2014, but she owes the college a significant amount of money for taking those courses and the college will not release her transcript until she pays the outstanding balance. She states that she cannot afford to pay the college for the classes that she took. As such, Respondent remains unable to provide any proof of completion of required continuing education during the June 1, 2012 - May 31, 2014 biennial period and has failed to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Board, that she actually successfully completed any courses.

Regarding her falsification of medical records and concomitant professional misconduct, Respondent admitted that she did so because she was stressed and overwhelmed. She professes that she has learned from her mistake and will seek out resources designed to help nurses when they are overwhelmed and will help and encourage other nurses to do the same. Although she maintains that her work history is clear of any prior misconduct, the Board notes that the conduct here involved multiple patient charts and displayed a pattern of misconduct and falsification.

The Board reviewed Respondent's submissions and determined that further proceedings were not necessary. The Board was not persuaded that the submitted materials merited further

consideration. The Board determined that the proposed discipline is warranted.

ACCORDINGLY, IT IS on this 08 day of June, 2016,
ORDERED that:

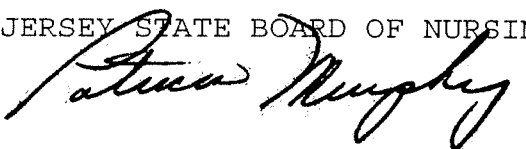
1. A reprimand is hereby imposed for the falsification of records in violation of N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(b) and (e).
2. A reprimand is hereby imposed for misrepresentation with respect to continuing education on Respondent's 2014 renewal application in violation of N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(b).
3. A civil penalty in the amount of \$250 is hereby imposed for the violation of N.J.A.C. 13:37-5.3. Payment shall be made by certified check, bank cashier check, or money order payable to "State of New Jersey," or by wire transfer, direct deposit, or credit card payment delivered or mailed to State Board of Nursing, Attention: Leslie Burgos, P.O. Box 45010, Newark, New Jersey 07101. Any other form of payment will be rejected and will be returned to the party making the payment. Payment shall be made no later than twenty-one (21) days after the date of filing of this Final Order of Discipline. In the event Respondent fails to make a timely payment, a certificate of debt shall be filed in accordance with N.J.S.A. 45:1-24 and the Board may bring such other proceedings as authorized by law.

4. Respondent shall, within three months of the filing of this Final Order of Discipline, provide documentation of successful completion of a continuing education course in documentation. Respondent shall obtain pre-approval from the Board for any course she proposes to take prior to enrollment in such course. This course shall not count as continuing education and shall be in addition to the 30 hours of continuing education required for license renewal.

5. The continuing education dated April 21, 2015, furnished to belatedly satisfy respondent's continuing education obligation for the June 1, 2012 - May 31, 2014 licensing cycle, may not be applied to satisfy respondent's obligation for the June 1, 2014 - May 31, 2016 licensing cycle. Respondent shall complete an additional 30 hours of continuing education prior to May 31, 2016.

NEW JERSEY STATE BOARD OF NURSING

By: _____


Patricia Murphy, PhD, APN
Board President